

Matching Funds for Retention Incentives for Early Learning Staff Request for Funds

Frequently Asked Questions

Please note: Recently updated or added questions and answers have (6-5-03) at the end of them.

I. Programmatic

A. General

- 1. On page 2 of the April 2003 RFF, June 13, 2003 is stated as the due date, but on page 24 it says May 23, 2003. What is the correct due date of the application?**
The application must be postmarked by June 13, 2003 or it will be considered late.
- 2. When will the project end?**
This phase of the pilot project now targeting priority zones and FCC providers will end on June 30, 2005.
- 3. Is participation in one of the previous rounds required to be eligible for 3rd round funding?**
No, all County Commissions are eligible for participation if they have an active CRI program by June 30, 2004. (Please see page 7 of the April 2003 RFF.)
- 4. Do we have to submit an application if we have participated in a previous round?**
Yes, all counties (both those joining the project in the third round and those who participated in earlier rounds) are required to submit a comprehensive application for the third application round (2003-05).
- 5. Do we need to attach the supply maps in color with our application?**
It is not required but attachments that help describe your priority zones may be added to your application. **(6-5-03)**
- 6. Must the percentages of family child care providers and center providers participating in this initiative equal the percentage each represents of providers in the county?**
That is the goal. While this may not be achievable in your first year, your program narrative should describe your steps toward achieving parity.

7. Concerning the proportional participation of licensed family child care providers, will the State Commission be seeking a specific percentage?

No. However, the State Commission would not only like to see this group participating, but also for the County Commission to promote accessibility to this program for this population and supports for them to continue their participation.

8. How should differing salaries be handled – in terms of staff at child development centers, Head Start centers, and school district centers – with regards to stipends/incentives?

Each County must decide where staff retention is an issue and act accordingly. Some counties have discussed not providing compensation to providers who exceed a certain salary level or giving priority to those below a certain amount.

9. Do we have to collaborate with our Local Child Care Planning Council (LPC)?

Yes, as stated on page 20 of the RFF, "In order to ensure non-duplication of services and maximization of local funds, all County Commissions must coordinate with their Local Child Care Planning Councils (LPC) and the AB212 (Chapter 547, Statutes of 2000) local initiatives. Use the top portion of Form 6 to document support of the LPC."

10. How often are progress reports expected?

Progress and expenditure reports are due on October 15, 2003 for those counties participating in Round Two, FY 01/02 - 02/03. For Round Three, FY 03/04 - 04/05, progress and expenditure reports are due on October 15 of 2004 and 2005. Expenditure reports also are due on April 15 of 2004 and 2005. Please refer to page 21 of the April 2003 RFF for a list of expenditure and progress report due dates. **(6-5-03)**

11. Will County Commissions be offered training, other than that for the Database?

First 5 California is investigating ways to provide on-going training and technical assistance in both programmatic and database areas to county CRI programs to implement the retention/compensation strategy that the county selects.

12. In terms of the ages of the children served, is school age acceptable?

Providers not serving birth to five-year old children are not eligible to receive stipends from this project. However, providers who in the current fiscal year are serving both children birth to five as well as school-age children are eligible.

13. Do all collaborative partners have to be listed?

No, only funding partners, the Local Child Care Planning Council Chair, and the authorized representative from the County First 5 for the School Readiness Initiative Program are required to sign. However, counties are encouraged to list all collaborative partners as this provides First 5 California a more in-depth picture of your program.

14. Is the first “Signature of Authorized Representative” found below the double lines the Commission representative’s signature?

Yes.

15. Is there a policy against collaborating with other local agencies that may receive AB 212 funding?

Counties are highly encouraged to collaborate with other local agencies. Specifically, the State Commission feels that working with Local Child Care Planning Councils (LPCs) would be highly beneficial for both parties. Any money going to another agency must be in furtherance of this initiative as described in the application and adhere to the county procurement/allocation rules. You will need to be able to account for the local and state funds spend toward this initiative in expenditure reports and the annual audit.

16. In terms of local funding partners, is a letter of commitment required from each?

No. Letters of commitment are optional.

17. How does a county go about partnering with a Local Workforce Investment Board?

Please contact Bob Marr of the Employment Development Division at bmarr@edd.ca.gov.

18. What retention incentives are County Commissions utilizing?

Stipends, Benefit packages, and health insurance are a few of the retention incentives listed on the Intent to Apply forms. Please refer to the report, “Matching Funds for Retention Incentives for Early Care and Education Staff: Evaluation - Year One Progress Report” available at http://pace.berkeley.edu/pace_eval_matching_funds.html for more information.

19. Is a program including accreditation, career development/counseling/training, and stipends allowable?

As stated on page 9 of the RFF, “CCFC will not match programs that are solely related to training, financing accreditation costs, or projects that do not provide a type of compensation directly to qualified early learning staff.” Accreditation that is required for continued participation or is part of the program supports for participants to increase their professional development would be covered. Training directly related to this initiative, may be covered in the match. An example is training required of providers who participated in the first year stipend program to receive compensation in the second year.

20. On Budget Form 3a, page 25 of the April 2003 RFF what constitutes training?

The training needs to be directly related to the staff receiving the compensation/retention incentives. For example, if your county has a CARES model and is having participants join a Child Development Corps as part of their requirements to receive the stipend/bonus/benefit, training costs related to the Corps can be matched. Training for staff related to the Packard Database and evaluation can also be matched.

21. Will an electronic version of the April 2003 RFF be available?

The RFF may be downloaded from First 5 California's website. Additionally, a copy of the RFF as a Word document may be obtained by emailing Erik Miyao at emiyao@ccfc.ca.gov.

22. What processes have other counties developed for using a subcontractor?

County procedures must be followed in determining a subcontractor. First 5 California encourages County Commissions to collaborate and share information with one another.

23. Can funds be used with people who don't work directly with children?

Yes. Please refer to page 10 of the RFF, which states that all teaching and administrative staff who directly supervise qualified staff working with children in center-based programs "are eligible, regardless of job title and program type."

24. Can we pay for permits for pre-entry level participants?

Yes, if they qualify and if a permit is one of your program requirements for a participant.

25. Can funds be used for substitute teachers so that participants may attend training?

Yes, this could be considered program supports for participants.

26. Should we link training for child care providers to units?

Yes, as much as possible trainings should carry units. This supports participants' attainment of a Child Development permit and Child Development degrees.

B. Priority Zones

1. Are we permitted to fund only priority zones? Can we continue to serve participants outside the new high priority zones with the local match funds? Once we have served all of the providers who have applied in the high priority zones, can we use the match funds to serve providers outside the high priority zones?

As stated on page 11 of the RFF, "Priority for all new participants receiving the state match portion is for those from S-R-I-eligible communities and low supply areas. Counties may provide justification for other uses of the State match portion in the case of saturation of eligible providers in the target areas and in the case of other high priority areas specific to county needs that do not align with priority zones." Page 18 of the RFF further states, "unless a county provides evidence that extensive outreach has occurred and full participation already has been achieved, the expectation is that the state portion of the funding must emphasize and target these priority populations." The county portion of the funding may go to staff in non-priority zones.

2. Please define what constitutes a priority zone.

Priority zones for this initiative are comprised of S-R-I - communities (API 1-5) as well as areas with a low supply of licensed child care. Charts that list the 'high priority' schools in each county are listed on the CCFC School Readiness website (<http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/SchoolReady.htm>). The Geographic Information System (GIS) on our website (www.ccfc.ca.gov) identifies school readiness communities and the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network's website (www.rnetwork.org), under 'our research' identifies areas of low supply of licensed child care through supply maps.

In addition, information on the API for California public schools is available at the California Department of Education (CDE) website (<http://www.cde.ca.gov>), under "API – Academic Performance Index and includes API Base Reports." The following information is available: 1) Detailed Instructions for Accessing Reports, 2) County List of Schools, 3) District List of Schools, 4) School Level Reports, and 5) Explanatory Notes that include information about the data contained in the API reports. Information about the STAR 2000 which includes the Stanford 9 (SAT 9) is also included on the CDE website.

Each county is defining their S-R-I area (the school catchment/attendance area) and needs to provide that in their application. Please refer to pg. 18, #2 to see more on what to provide in your application. **(6-5-03)**

3. What year is being used as the basis for the API score?

Similar to the S-R-I, the API score being used is based on the 1999-2000 fiscal year. However, should your county feel that the data from that year is not reflective of the current situation, please note what data you are utilizing and why.

4. What do counties without API 1-3 do?

First 5 California has expanded the priority zone to API 1-5 to accommodate rural counties. In your application, please define areas being targeted and note the lack of API 1-3, or 1-5. The priority zones also consist of areas with a low supply of licensed child care. Counties with a lack of S-R areas can focus on low supply areas as well as the areas they will be targeting with their local S-R program.

5. What is the new entry level component?

As stated on page 10 of the RFF, this is an optional component meant to target center based early learning staff and home-based providers working in priority zones that do not meet the minimum qualifications to participate in the CRI component. As an optional component, it is up to individual counties to determine the best model, including participation requirements. It is CCFC's intent that the pre-entry-level component be for "intentional" early learning staff. Therefore, any child caregiver must at a minimum meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive State retention incentive funds and county matching funds for the pre-entry-level component: (1) cares for at least one child other than her/his own that is birth to five; and (2) enrolls in pre-entry-level training component and makes continued progress in the program.

6. Low capacity – can it be low infant care or is it total or other types of typically low-supply care such as non-traditional hours?

The intent of the MFFRI Initiative was to target geographic areas with a low supply. At the same time, First 5 California acknowledges that licensed spaces for infant/toddler care is low compared to the demand. Counties who first target the priority zones could then use local or remaining state funds to target types of care. The type of care and manner in which it is being targeted should be noted in your application.

C. ECE Staff Eligibility

1. Can the units for the eligibility requirements be non-ECE based?

No. As stated on page 11 of the April 2003 RFF, center based staff must have completed a minimum of 6 units of ECE to be eligible. Further, any family child care provider will only be eligible to receive State retention incentive funds if s/he: has met the 6 ECE unit requirement, has completed other non-unit based training equivalent to 6 hours that is above minimum licensing requirements (i.e. health and safety), and/or is enrolled and making regular progress in unit-bearing coursework in ECE (stipends scheduled after completion)."

2. Are Head Start staff eligible for Prop 10 incentives?

Yes, from the State perspective. County Commissions may decide to impose more stringent local requirements.

3. In reference to the nine month period that a provider must have provided care in order to "be eligible to receive State retention incentive funds" as stated on page 11 of the April 2003 RFF:

a. Does it have to be a period of nine consecutive months?

No.

b. Does the nine-month period have to occur within the fiscal year?

Yes.

c. Instead of having worked nine months from the period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2004, is a longer period, for example twelve months, not within that period an acceptable criterion?

No, with the exception of migrant programs in 3d below, the provider must have worked nine months prior to June 30, 2004 (for fourth year funds).

The nine month period may be increased, however, as it is only a minimum which the initiative requires. **(6-5-03)**

d. Migrant programs are only 6 months in duration. If we require two consecutive periods of employment can staff from these programs participate?

Yes, First 5 California acknowledges the uniqueness of migrant programs and wishes to promote retention and professional development of those staff.

4. How does the CCFC define the 9 months minimum tenure of employment? Are a certain number of weeks or days for employment in the field for eligibility?

No. The State Commission does not require a certain number of days or weeks, only the specified 9 months. We have left the specific definition up to local counties.

5. Can participants who work for the same program/employer/agency but have moved sites within the nine-month period still be eligible to participate?

Yes. It is the State Commission's intent that providers are eligible if they move to different sites within one agency in order to cover those providers who may have worked for the same agency but at different sites due to administrative decisions.

6. In terms of the 15-hour/week-minimum to qualify for the CRI component, is there any flexibility in the number of hours?

The criteria listed on page 11 of the April 2003 RFF are minimum levels required by the State Commission. Individual County Commissions may require additional hours or months.

7. Does the \$60,000 maximum annual salary apply to all program participants?

The \$60,000 maximum annual salary applies to all new program participants. As stated in footnote number 11 on page 11 of the RFF, "The CCFC recommends that counties observe this income ceiling for all program participants but counties may allow continued participation of those already in the program without utilizing salary as an eligibility factor."

8. Do all participants have to obtain a Child Development Permit?

No, as stated on page 12 of the April 2003 RFF, "Center-based participants must apply for the Child Development Permit by the fifth year of participation in the CRI program. (The goal is to have this as a requirement for all returning participants.)" Please refer to page 11 of the RFF for minimum and continuing eligibility requirements. **(6-5-03)**

9. What child care center employees are eligible for participation? Can program directors who do not directly work with children qualify for a stipend?

Yes. "The target population is qualified ECE staff including home-based, licensed and license-exempt (license-exempt is optional) FCC providers, FCC assistants, and center-based staff in public and private child care programs in California. In center-based programs, all teaching and administrative staff who directly supervise staff working with children and meet the qualifications below are eligible, regardless of job title and program type." Please refer to page 11 of the April 2003 RFF for the qualifications.

10. What about unlicensed providers? Do providers have to achieve licensure to remain in the program/receive funds?

Yes, as stated on page 12 of the April 2003 RFF, an unlicensed participant “must apply for licensure and achieve licensure by the second year of participation in the program with the exception of those providing care in the child’s home, those working at a public school-based site, or those employed in a facility exempt from licensure by the DSS/CCL Division because it is either administered by a Tribal Council or located on a U.S. military installation.”

11. What is the State Commission’s position on stipends for substitutes who have worked at multiple sites?

State matching funds and local funding used to obtain the state match may not be used for stipends for substitutes who have worked at multiple sites. Although First 5 California appreciates the value of regular substitute teachers, the goal of the Retention Incentives Matching Funds pilot project is to improve the quality and stability of the early learning workforce.

12. Will a provider be eligible if they have switched jobs?

Yes, as long as they have worked at the new job for at least 9 months prior to applying.

13. If a provider has worked at different sites are they eligible?

Yes, as long as they have worked for the same agency.

14. Can DSS/CCL Division license exempt public schools be included along with Tribal lands and U.S. military installations?

Yes, please refer to page 12 of the RFF that indicates inclusion of “those working at a public school-based site, or those employed in a facility exempt from licensure by the DSS/CCL Division because it is either administered by a Tribal Council or located on a U.S. military installation.”

II. Administrative/Fiscal

1. Do you require Commission approval for the application?

The Commission chair must sign the application acknowledging the County Commission’s approval of the application.

2. Are we expected to modify our existing contract that provides match funds for this initiative to include the modified guidelines?

County CRI programs that wish to participate in the MFFRI project for FY 03/04 or FY 04/05 must adhere to the guidelines in the April 2003 RFF. Counties will need to follow local procedures to make that happen.

3. What period does the Fiscal Year cover?

The Fiscal Year covers the period from July 1 to June 30 of the next year. As an example, FY 2003-04 would cover the period from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004.

4. What happens to the fund balance that we do not end up using from the first/second funding round? Can it be rolled over?

Yes. On pg. 9 of RFF: "Unspent funds from the previous time period and agreement (FY 01/02 - FY 02/03) may be rolled over. These funds must be included in the proposed budget in the application to this RFF for the next time period. The application also should include a brief explanation of the reasons why funds were not spent." On pg. 25, it also states to: "Please declare any unexpended/roll-over funds from the first three years of the MFFRI project (FY 2000-2003). Counties must note how those funds will be expended in this budget."

5. If a County Commission does not use all of the matching funds applied for, in other words, if there is a surplus of funds available at the end of the 04/05 year, would the County be required to return those funds to the State? If so, how would that process take place?

Funds do not have to be completely expended prior to the end of the fiscal year. In the April 2003 RFF pg.25, it states: "Retention Incentive Funds must flow directly to ECE staff by September 30, 2004 to qualify for FY 2003-04 funds and by September 30, 2005 to qualify for FY 2004-05 funds." The third funding round covers the time period from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2005 and all funds allocated during that time period are expected to be expended during the same agreement time (with incentives flowing to staff by September 30 of each program year).

In addition, County Commissions will be required to provide updates on local match sources and expenditures and CCFC may adjust apportionments accordingly. County Commissions must account for revenues and expenditures and program performance in the annual audit report and, "allocations may be adjusted based on expenditure and progress report (Pg. 21)." These reports are due twice a year and the allocations of the award are also a yearly process. If after FY 03/04, County Commissions are rolling over funds, those funds will be applied to their budget for the next fiscal year and the amount of their award may be decreased accordingly. If there is any additional carry over funds, the County Commission will be expected to use these rollover funds for the prescribed purpose. **(6-5-03)**

6. When do we have to issue the incentive/stipends to participants to qualify to participate in this project?

Pg. 25 of RFF: "Retention Incentive Funds must flow directly to ECE staff by September 30, 2004 to qualify for FY 2003-04 funds and by September 30, 2005 to qualify for FY 2004-05 funds."

7. What if our County Commission will only approve (local) funds for one year?

If your county has specific funding constraints, you would complete a comprehensive application and ask for one year of funding (making you ineligible for any funding the second year of the program); or estimate the maximum anticipated funding for the second year, then request yearly agreement forms from the State Commission with only the first year of funding guaranteed for your county. The State Commission will require your formal agreement forms for FY 04-05 by December 30, 2003. If your

application is awaiting approval from the County Commission or Board of Supervisors, please request the maximum anticipated amount, noting its pending approval from funding partners. Upon approval, you would need to resubmit the appropriate budget and funding partners' pages.

- 8. We will not have our County Commission's commitment for FY 04/05 funding until July 2004. Your response says that the formal agreements forms for FY 04/05 are due December 2003. Will there be any latitude for submission of the formal agreement forms later than December 30, 2003?**

No. First 5 California will need to determine the total allocation for this project by December 30, 2003. **(6-5-03)**

- 9. What if our County Commission decides to decrease the amount of local investment for FY 04/05 after the application is submitted? Can the project funded by First 5 CA be scaled back to reflect the lower investment by our Commission?**

Yes, the State match amount needs to be decreased if the local investment decreases. You would need to resubmit the appropriate budget and funding partners pages and sign a new agreement form by December 30, 2003. **(6-5-03)**

- 10. Is more money, above the State Match percentage, available?**

No. As stated on pages 7-8 of the April 2003 RFF, "First 5 California will match up to 25% of the local investment for Group A Counties (those counties receiving \$3,000,000 or more from monthly disbursements in Fiscal Year 99/00). Group B Counties (those counties receiving less than \$3,000,000 from monthly disbursements in Fiscal Year 99/00) will be matched at a rate up to 50% by the CCFC. That is, four dollars of cash must be supplied locally for every one-dollar awarded by the State for Group A Counties (4:1); and two dollars of cash must be supplied locally for every one dollar awarded for Group B Counties (2:1)."

- 11. Is there a cap for how much can be spent on the optional entry-level component?**

No, there is no cap or percentage on how much can or must be spent on any component.

- 12. Can State Matching funds be used for grants to a center or family child care network that in turn provides benefits to providers? Can child care centers receive state matching funds?**

Yes, while retention incentives must be paid directly to ECE staff, program supports for CRI participants such as training, substitutes, and accreditation may be paid to other institutions or agencies such as centers. These supports must be for participants in the CRI program who are receiving retention incentives such as stipends.

At the same time, a significant portion of your funding must be used for "direct compensation to early care and education providers." "For purposes of this initiative a CRI program is defined as a program that provides direct compensation and/or incentives to qualified early learning staff and is

designed to retain those in the early care field and stem the tide of turnover as well as support their professional development and education." Please see page 8 of the April 2003 RFF. **(6-5-03)**

13. What expenses are non-allowable? Are equipment expenses allowable?

All funds must be spent on this initiative. Examples of non-allowable expenses include out of state travel, food, facilities rental, lease, purchase or renovation. Equipment expenses, however, are allowable if they are wholly and directly related to the project.

14. Does the non-allowable expenses criteria for matching funds also apply to county funds?

Yes, the criteria apply to the county funds identified for state matching funds except in regards to facilities.

15. Where do we put carry over on pg. 25, Form 3a? Won't that make a large state match?

Form 3a, carry-over is only put in the first column. The state will not match previously unexpended (carry over) dollars as those funds are a combination of previously matched local funds and state match. **(6-5-03)**

16. On pg. 25, Form 3a, where do we show the carry-over funds in the total budget for FY 03/04 since it is part of the budget for that year but is separate from the amount of county funds and state match for that year?

Counties can either add another column for FY 03/04 that shows the carry over from FY 02/03 or they can add it to the Total column of FY 03/04. If you put it in the Total column, please put the carry over amount on top and then a slash with the total funds for that row on the bottom. **(6-5-03)**

17. On Form 3a , if staff does direct training and support for the program participants, where do we put their salary? Similarly, if staff does evaluation, such as reporting and analysis, does part of their salary go under these categories rather than under "Administrative Expenses?"

Put all staff salaries under administrative expenses. **(6-5-03)**

18. Do rent and utilities fall under "Other" under Administrative Expenses?" too?

Rent and utilities are also part of the administrative expenses. **(6-5-03)**

19. Are ECE staff working with five-year olds eligible to participate, or just those working with children under five? In other words, is the age requirement "0 through 5" or "0 TO 5 -year olds?"

CCFC funds are for children 0 - 5. In many cases, County Commissions have their own guidelines on the use of this term. The MFFRI will follow the First 5 School Readiness Initiative so that matching funds can be distributed to staff working with children 0 (prenatal) to 5 (through the fifth birthday). The intent of the First 5 MFFRI funds is to utilize funds with ECE staff working with children before they enter kindergarten. **(6-5-03)**

- 20. Some state-supported programs require that, in the overall agency budget, a facility rental percentage must be attached to each employee. In light of the restriction on funding facilities, if such employees are involved in administering the matching funds initiative, how should we handle this facilities rental issue?**

It may be listed as an administrative cost, consistent with normal personnel accounting practices. The restrictions are mainly to prevent the renting of new spaces.

- 21. Is it true that we cannot charge facility rent to either matching or local budgets? If so, how does this contract work in a cost allocation plan for shared facility rental?** On page 25 of the RFF, Form 3a, "State funds may not be used toward facilities rental, lease, purchase or renovation." The CCFC expects that the majority of state funds will go to retention incentives and then program supports and outreach activities. While CCFC funds cannot be used for the acquisition or purchase of fixed or capital assets, this restriction does not impact county commission matching funds. Also, the local match can be used for facility rental. **(6-5-03)**

- 22. Can we use our local School Readiness Program funds to obtain the State MFFRI funds?**

No, you are not allowed to double dip the local match for both 'school readiness programs' and 'retention incentive programs'.

- 23. Can county commission funds or other local funds be used to provide local matching funds for more than one First 5 CCFC initiative (e.g. School readiness, MFFRI)?**

County commissions and other local funds can only be used once as local matching funds for a First 5 California initiative. **(6-5-03)**

- 24. Can local First 5 funds already committed to a child care/ECE program be used as part of the county match? Can we add the administrative cost to these?**

Yes, but only if they are a component of your CRI program and the participants are also participants in the local CRI. County Commission funds committed to projects that will become part of your CRI Program during the current fiscal year may be counted as local match. Funds committed to programs, or parts of programs, not included in the CRI or pre-entry level component cannot be considered as "match". CCFC funds may be used to expand an existing or previously planned program that is consistent with the initiative and is included as part of the county's application. Please describe any sources of local match and the program component in your application. Administrative costs associated with the program are covered.

Any other funded initiatives/programs folded into your CRI program must follow all the guidelines in the RFF. On pg. 8 of the RFF, "CCFC funds may be used for:

- Direct compensation to early learning staff (targeting participants from priority zones):

- Outreach, incentives, training, and support services related to optional pre-entry-level staff component (targeting priority participants).
- Administrative/training costs for CRI program staff directly related to this initiative.
- Intensive outreach targeted especially to S-R communities, low supply areas, and FCC to encourage diverse participation that is reflective of the local ECE community.
- Additional supports and professional development/training opportunities linked to the compensation incentives for individual staff participants.
- Collecting and reporting of information in the CARES database and other evaluation activities directly related to this initiative." **(6-5-03)**

a. If we are funding a training program/class for ECE staff or home visiting with family child care providers, can we use this as part of the local match since it relates to the program supports?

Yes, but only if the project directly relates to the participants in your CRI program or entry-level component and the local investment is part of your CRI program. The training/class or home visiting must be to support the participants in your CRI program (so that they can continue to participate and be eligible again the following year) or must be a required component for them to receive their retention incentive/stipend. **(6-5-03)**

b. May we use as match local accreditation funding by Prop 10 or a local business to a county child care program?

Only if it directly relates to staff's participation in the CRI program. For example, if you require or suggest that program directors and FCC owners have their sites become accredited for continued participation, then you could help cover those costs. This would fall under program supports. **(6-5-03)**

c. What if there is a quality improvement initiative funded by the local commission that supports stipends, accreditation and small program improvements?

It must be for CRI program participants and it must follow the guidelines listed in the RFF. **(6-5-03)**

25. Can we use funds as an incentive to attract people to the field?

No. At this point, the initiative is to retain those already providing care in the field. **(6-5-03)**

26. Can I use local CCIP incentives?

It depends. Not if they are state funds. Yes, if the CCIP training/incentive is specifically for those participating in your CRI program and it meets the other guidelines in the RFF. If the CCIP training is open to all ECE staff but a significant portion (50% or more) are also enrolled in the CRI program, then you can use the amount of CRI participants to calculate the percentage of local funding that would be applicable. **(6-5-03)**

- 27. If we have a combined AB 212/MFFRI, following the guidelines on pg. 11 #8 of the RFF, do we have to create separate applications for each so that people aren't applying for both or can we continue to have one application process? Internally we determine which funding source the applicant is eligible for.**

You may continue to have only one application. The concern that led to the guideline "is receiving these funds from only one county in California and is not applying for or receiving AB212 funds" was that there were some cases where people received funding from both sources. Not all counties have the county CRI program and the AB212 program combined, so they are unable to ensure that someone receives only one award per year. **(6-5-03)**

- 28. How many counties have folded AB212 funds into the CRI project?**

At least 42 counties are totally linked. Some counties utilize different criteria for the AB212 and CRI funds. Other counties utilize one application and set of criteria in awarding the funds; these counties then determine which funding source to utilize for each specific applicant.

- 29. Are counties' CalWORKS Performance Incentive Funds and Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIBs) funds allowable sources of local match?**

In general, State and Federal funds are not allowable as local match for this project. However, to promote collaboration in seeking long-term solutions to this workforce issue, counties' CalWORKS Performance Incentive Funds and Local Workforce Investment Board funds may be used as sources of local match under these conditions:

- The County Commission assures that the funds are used consistent with the provisions of State and Federal law and in furtherance of this project.
- The County Commission fulfills the requirement for the local Prop. 10 portion of local match.

- 30. Can in-kind funds be used as a local match to be used toward administration, training, and/or travel?**

No, in-kind funds will not be matched. The State Commission will match only cash investments.

- 31. Does the funding cycle have to correspond to the fiscal year of the State Commission?**

As stated on page 9 of the April 2003 RFF, "The CCFC acknowledges that some local programs may start to issue stipends later than July 1, 2003 and conclude later than June 30, 2005. Unless CCFC provides prior written approval, County Commissions will be expected to expend these funds by September 30, 2005."

- 32. In the RFF, license exempt staff can now receive retention incentive funds with the stipulation that they become licensed to participate in the second year. Turnaround time with regards to fingerprinting in the licensure process may prevent us from issuing stipends by the end of the fiscal year to those staff that are license exempt. Can we still have them participate and just hold their incentive/stipend until their licensure application clears?**

Yes. First 5 California acknowledges that there can be unforeseen delays in the licensure process. Programs may contingently award license exempt staff that are actively applying for licensure and simply hold the applicant's incentive/stipend until the process is complete. The participant would then receive the incentive once s/he becomes licensed.

33. Do we have to report how AB212 funds are expended?

While we do not expect the same level of detail for AB212 funds as for State Matching (CRI) funds, we would like a very brief description of how the funds are being expended with respect to the CRI project. This gives us a more complete picture of the CRI project in your county. Ideally, counties will enter AB212 participants in the CRI database so there would be information available on both programs.

34. Is the actual match for large counties 20% or 25%?

The State Match for large counties is up to 25% of the local match. Therefore, CCFC will match 1 dollar for every 4 dollars of local funds invested. The State Match is with respect to the County investment and not the total program budget. Smaller counties are matched at up to a 50% rate. Please refer to Appendix A on page 32 of the RFF to determine which rate you are eligible for in this round.

35. Will the project allow counties to pool funds?

Yes, consistent with the California Children and Families Act, County Commissions may collaborate to implement joint projects. On pg. 7 of the RFF it states that, "County Commissions are encouraged to collaborate with one another on this initiative to create cohesive programs and reduce administrative costs."

36. What funds may be used as sources of local investment?

As stated on page 8 of the RFF, "AB212 (Chapter 547, Statutes of 2000) funds and other state funds or Head Start funds may **not** be included in the local investment for matching. CalWORKS Performance funds and Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) funds may be used as local match. Counties are required to account for these funds separately for reporting and auditing purposes. **All funds used to obtain the state match must adhere to the guidelines in this RFF.**"

37. For the local funds to be met by the State Match, will CCFC match funds that are also going to exclusively school age or just to those designated in the RFF?

Just to those that meet the criteria stated in the April 2003 RFF. School age only cannot be part of the local money to be matched by the state.

38. If the Local Child Care Planning Council is putting some money into the program, can we use that as part of the match?

No, not if the funds are State funds.

39. Should the state and federal fund amounts be listed?

Yes, while state and most federal funds may not be included in the local investment for matching, CCFC would like to see them listed in order to better

understand a County's programs and costs. CalWorks Performance funds and LWIB funds may be included in the match.

40. Where should non-matching funds be listed?

Non-matching funds should be listed in the budget narrative section of your county's application. A brief description of the origin of the funds and their intended use would help the State Commission in better understanding your county's retention incentives program.

41. Do evaluation costs have to be listed separately in the budget? Or can this be listed internally as a line item?

No, evaluation costs no longer have to be listed separately in the budget. (6-5-03)

42. Is there a limit on administrative or evaluation funds that can be requested from the state?

In order to determine the feasibility of the project and better understand the nature of administrative and evaluation costs incurred in running it, there is no limit on amount of funds used for administration or evaluation. We realize that the evaluation component requires support staff and that the data entry can be time consuming, however, consistent with guidance in other areas, we hope to see low administrative and evaluation costs. In this initiative, we expect most of the funds to go to staff in the form of compensation/incentives. We also expect funds to go to training and supports for staff to participate in this project. This is a pilot project and will be evaluated for its cost-effectiveness and effects on retention and professional development.

43. If we need to adjust our budget, by moving moneys among certain line items, after the State Commission's approval of our application, do we need permission before doing so?

No, but any budget adjustments need to be noted in the expenditure and progress reports due to the State Commission. The funds may be transferred among the budget line items as long as they are still spent directly on this program.

44. We are trying to ensure that our CARES stipend recipients are listed as "confidential vendors" ensuring that their names and addresses never become public record. Though we cannot find anything in the state contract, we assumed that the recipients should remain confidential. Is there any documentation stating that the recipients can or should remain "confidential?"

No, there is nothing at the state level stating that stipend recipient payments should remain confidential. Consequently, the issue of confidentiality would be a county level decision. (6-5-03)

On the other hand, with regards to evaluation purposes, confidentiality is an issue. Please note that First 5 California will never release any personal information on any participant in any published report. Individual data will only be used to conduct the analysis. Any published reports will only use aggregate data. In addition, we first must obtain informed consent from participants before we can access the individual level data. County

Commissions' help in obtaining informed consent from existing and new participants will be extremely helpful.

III. Evaluation/Data Collection

- 1. Are we going to get support from First 5 California to make revisions to the database? Will we need to obtain the services ourselves or will you be working with someone to provide the necessary changes to all the counties?**

Currently, First 5 California is working to identify organization(s) that will assist in making the revisions to the database, installation of the revised database, training County Commission staff, providing ongoing technical assistance, collecting and analyzing the data. Once the organization is identified, we will communicate with County Commissions on how the process of revising the database will work.

- 2. What percentage of administrative funds should be set for evaluation? What is the cost to modify the database? What types of data will County Commissions need to collect? What fields are in the database?**

The time and money spent in collecting and entering the data will vary depending upon the program and application. Include this cost in your budget as it qualifies for match. Please review the Packard database description (Appendix B of the April 2003 RFF) to estimate the staff time required for data collection. We were told for the second round to estimate at least \$2,000 for some basic training and a few County adaptations of the database. According to Alameda CFC, straight data entry of the frozen fields will take approximately 20 minutes per participant. San Francisco CFC has given a timeframe of approximately 45 minutes to enter data and run reports.

- 3. What should continuing participants (participants from the earlier rounds) do concerning consent forms for the evaluation?**

First 5 California or its designee will be sending out postcards to earlier round applicants.

First 5 California or its designee will send the revised informed consent form to participants to review and sign. The revised consent form will allow First 5 California and its designee access to all data.

- 4. Do we have to use the language found on the sample consent form on page 40?**

Yes. Please contact Oshi Ruelas, oruelas@ccfc.ca.gov, if you need to modify the consent language for your program.

- 5. I see from the RFF that we need to release the participant data to the State. How will we be accomplishing this?**

Data transmittal will occur in the same manner as it has the last few years. The receiver of the data may change, but the process will be the same.

6. Is Appendix B of the RFF (pp. 33-40) a definitive list of the required information?

This information is substantially complete. The CCFC may be making a few more additions and will let you know within the next few weeks. **(6-5-03)**

7. In Attachment B pg. 37, under both Family Child Care Providers and License Exempt Providers, there is a section on the relationship to the children in care. Many caregivers provide care for multiple children. Do you want us to report their relationship with each child in their care? How does this work with a drop down menu?

Unfortunately, Attachment B does not reflect all the technical nuances that will need to be made to the database. It does, however, reflect all the necessary data that we need to collect. Once the database is revised it will have a drop down menu from which to select. The menu will include relatives and non-relatives (e.g., grandmother, aunt, non-relative/neighbor, non-relative/friend, etc.). When a neighbor is also the grandmother or aunt, relatedness will supersede. The menu will allow relationship options for a caregiver who cares for multiple children. **(6-5-03)**

8. When will the in-depth evaluation end?

The current PACE evaluation is scheduled to end June 30, 2004. Once that is completed, First 5 California will only require counties to continue to collect CARES participant data until June 30, 2005. First 5 California and its designee will gather and analyze the data and make reports available to all County Commissions.

9. Will there be any modifications to the information exported to PACE in the fall of 2003?

No. That information will cover participants through round two only. PACE is not changing the frozen fields in order to maintain consistency in the information gathered.

For the new data that will be collected beginning July 1, 2003, First 5 California is currently working on identifying an entity to collect the new data. Information on this will be sent as soon as it is available. As mentioned earlier, the data transmittal process will not change, only data elements and the data collector.

10. Is there a particular schedule for obtaining the demographic information from First 5 California?

First 5 California will only provide this information once a year. Individual counties might need to establish their own database to get such information in a timely manner.

11. Will we still be sending an annual query/report to PACE?

You will still send one to PACE that relates to FY 02/03 in the fall of 2003. First 5 California is currently working on identifying the organization that will collect the data for the third round (FY03/04 and 04/05) as well as provide training, technical assistance, and analysis of the data.

12. Our School Readiness areas are covered by AB212 participants. Will you be collecting information on these participants as well so we can demonstrate the coverage in priority zones?

Currently, there is a field for counties to enter if a participant is also an AB212 participant, but it is not in the frozen field section. Once the technical nuances are taken care of, this data element will become part of the frozen fields, including all the other revisions to the database. County Commissions will be the best source for identifying AB212 participants.